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ROUTING AND RECORD SHEET				
SUBJECT: (Optional) Monthly Report -- Nicosia Bureau				
FROM:		EXTENSION	NO.	
Chief, Operations Group			DATE December 1988	
TO: (Officer designation, room number, and building)		DATE		OFFICER'S INITIALS
		RECEIVED	FORWARDED	
1. C/MOD				COMMENTS (Number each comment to show from whom to whom. Draw a line across column after each comment.)
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11. C/Computer Operations				
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14. FED Secretary				
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FBIS-4801-89
10 January 89

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, Foreign Broadcast Information Service
THROUGH : Chief, Operations Group
SUBJECT : Monthly Report -- Nicosia Bureau -- December

I. GENERAL

The embassy community was personally saddened by the 21 December Pan Am airliner crash.

Many planned Christmas activities, including an FBIS party, were cancelled. Warned of possible terrorist incidents in the wake of the PLO diplomatic offensive, the bureau and embassy had already tightened security measures in the middle of the month. Guards continued to check thoroughly all cars entering the FBIS compound. All staff members have removed the diplomatic plates from their POV's, and all personnel were again instructed to be alert to possible suspicious activity at work and at home.

II. OPERATIONS

A. Monitorial/Editorial

1. With further ethnic violence in the Soviet republics of Azerbaijan and Armenia in November and the devastation caused by the earthquake in Armenia on 7 December, the bureau kept a close watch on Yerevan and Baku radios throughout the month, filing media behavior and reception reports until the situation stabilized. Wordage from Yerevan and Baku sources climbed in December to over 34,000 words, from a low of just over 400 words in May. The bureau fine-tuned the procedures set up in November to expedite processing of material from Baku by contract Turkish/Azeri monitor [redacted], who works in the Turkish-controlled part of the island. He sends his higher-precedence translations to Tel Aviv Bureau by facsimile over the international telephone lines for relay to Nicosia. The bureau can now process some items almost as fast as if [redacted] worked at the bureau. Nicosia also provided daily phone feeds of some Baku casts to the BBC for part of the month. An old Nicosia hand returned in December to fill in for the Bureau's Armenian/Persian monitor, who is on vacation until the middle of January. [redacted] a former bureau Armenian monitor, who now lives in Arizona and is a professor of engineering and a JPRS contractor, returned to the bureau for about three weeks' TDY. During this leave period, the BBC also took over some early morning Tehran newscasts to assist the one Persian monitor left

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during this time. In addition, to help meet the bureau's increased need for Armenian capability, a new Armenian/Turkish monitor who had been in the hiring pipeline for several weeks signed a six-month renewable contract in December and is currently in training.

2. Because of high consumer interest in 'Arafat's speech before the UN General Assembly in Geneva on 13 December, there was close coordination between the bureaus covering the Middle East and Europe. Nicosia took over responsibility for covering the event when reliable Cairo radio announced it would broadcast 'Arafat's speech live. Off-duty personnel were called in so that the 80-minute speech could be processed as quickly as possible.

3. There was another shooting near the Ledra Palace checkpoint in Nicosia this month, this time of a Turkish Cypriot soldier. The embassy's political section was kept informed of developments and the soldier's later death. The two Cypriot sides are currently considering moving their troops farther back from the "Green Line" in order to prevent the recurrence of such incidents.

4. Following coordination with London and Amman bureaus, Nicosia assumed primary responsibility for covering the Gulf Cooperation Council summit held in Manama, Bahrain, in the middle of December. The bureau was able to provide live coverage of the participants' arrivals and opening and closing addresses, as well as the final communique, from Manama television, which was relayed by Riyadh television via satellite.

5. The Voice of the Mediterranean radio station in Valletta, Malta, a joint Libyan-Maltese venture, was unheard from 9 December, the day after one of the worst storms in years, through 14 December. It resumed broadcasting on the 15th, with the announcement that it had been off the air for technical reasons.

6. The Islamic resistance in Lebanon claimed on 18 December that its forces had destroyed the pro-Israeli Voice of Hope radio station in Marj 'Uyun. However, the station continued broadcasting and later announced that its equipment had been undamaged in the rocket attack.

7. The bureau ended 1988 with a monthly average of 289,000 publishable words, about the same level as the previous three years.

III. ADMINISTRATION

A. Personnel

[redacted] new Armenian/Turkish contract monitor, concluded his EOD procedures on 15 December and began his monitorial training on 19 December.

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B. Building and Grounds

An Armenian monitoring room was set up this month in the room previously used to house the facsimile and microfiche machines and practice computers. The facsimile machine is now in the editorial room, where it can be watched more closely, the microfiche reader is in the bureau chief's office, and the computers will soon be installed in the monitoring and editorial sections. One PC is already in place in the Arabic section.

IV. VISITS

1. [redacted] JPRS contract translator, arrived 21 December for a three-week TDY to cover Armenian sources. He is accompanied by his wife [redacted]

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2. Regional engineer [redacted] and cruising monitor [redacted] were called for a tandem TDY to Tel Aviv from 4 to 8 December to survey possible sites for a new embassy in Tel Aviv.

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3. Communications operator [redacted], on TDY to Tel Aviv since 31 October while two vacant positions there were being filled, returned to Cyprus on 27 December.

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Bureau Chief
Nicosia Bureau